Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the application.

1.   (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a sale of a product with a computer system from an inventory of a selling entity, the method comprising [the] steps of:

receiving ~~interactively obtaining~~ information into the computer system regarding a customer's needs and ~~a plurality of~~ desired option selections related to one or more of products of the selling entity;

receiving ~~interactively obtaining~~ a value input associated with each ~~the~~ desired option selection into the computer system ~~options~~ to rank the importance of each of the ~~plurality of~~ desired option selections;

defining a configured product which satisfies the customer's needs and ~~contain~~ the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules to constrain selection of available product options; and

identifying from the ~~an~~ inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that most closely matches ~~which exactly corresponds to~~ the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections,[;] when an identified available product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not found in the inventory of the selling entity, ~~identifying one or more products using the value input associated with the plurality of desired option selections to determine one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.~~

2.   (Currently Amended) The [A] method of ~~as recited in~~ claim 1[,] wherein the value input associated with the ~~plurality of~~ desired options corresponds to a numeric value indicating importance of the <u>associated</u> ~~corresponding~~ desired option selection~~; and wherein the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer is determined using a summation of the numeric values for the value input associated with the plurality of desired option selections found in each of the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity~~.

3.   (Currently Amended) The [A] method of ~~as recited in~~ claim 1[,] wherein the value input associated with the ~~plurality of~~ desired options corresponds to a relative value indicating importance of the <u>associated</u> ~~corresponding~~ desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections<u>, the identifying step comprises identifying from</u> ~~; and wherein the one or more configured products found in~~ the inventory of the selling entity <u>one or more available products</u> that most closely matches the configured product <u>based on</u> ~~having the plurality desired option selections of the customer is determined~~ using the relative values of the value input associated with the desired option selections.

4.   (Currently Amended) The [A] method of ~~as recited in~~ claim 2[,] wherein the numeric value used in the value input corresponds to a value between 0 and 10.

5.   (Currently Amended) The [A] method of ~~as recited in~~ claim 1[,] wherein the logic rules comprise <u>constraint</u> ~~configuration~~ rules which define engineering relationships between product options used to constrain use of combinations of options.

6.   (Currently Amended) The [A] method of ~~as recited in~~ claim 1[5,] wherein the <u>logic</u> ~~configuration~~ rules comprise resource rules which define relationships between product options in terms of resources used and resources required.

7.	(Currently Amended) The [A] method of as recited in claim 1[5,] wherein the logic configuration rules comprise cross-reference rules which define relationships between similar product options.

8.	(Cancelled).

9.	(Cancelled).

10.	(Cancelled).

11.	(Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a sale of a configurable product with a computer system from an inventory of a selling entity, the method comprising [the] steps of:

	interactively presenting a customer by use of the computer system with a plurality of desired option selections available for inclusion within one or more of the selling entity configurable products;

	receiving interactively obtaining information into the computer system regarding needs of the customer and a plurality of desired option selections related to one or more of the selling entity configurable products;

	receiving interactively obtaining a value input associated with each the plurality of desired option selection into the computer system selections to rank importance of each of the desired option selections;

	defining a configured product found within the inventory of the selling entity which satisfies the needs of the customer and contains the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules to constrain selection of available product options; and

interactively presenting the [a] customer by utilizing the computer system with the plurality of desired option selections comprises presenting a customer with a plurality of desired option selections that are found within one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches contains all of the desired option selections specified by the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections, [; and] when the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity contain less than all of the plurality of desired selection option selections specified by the customer, identifying one or more configured products using a value input associated with the desired option selections to determine one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.

12. (Currently Amended) The [A] method of as recited in claim 11[,] wherein [:] the value input associated with the plurality of desired option selections corresponds to a numeric value indicating importance of the associated corresponding desired option selection; and the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer is determined using a summation of the numeric values for the value input associated with the desired option selections found in each of the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity.

13. (Currently Amended) The [A] method of as recited in claim 11[,] wherein [:] the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to a relative value indicating importance of the associated corresponding desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections, the step of presenting the customer through the computer system with one or more configured products comprises presenting [; and] the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product based on having the desired option selections of the customer is determined using the relative values of the value input associated with the desired option selections.

14. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of presenting the customer by utilizing the computer system with the one or more identified available products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.

15. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of identifying from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that exactly corresponds to the configured product.

16. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of storing in a memory arrangement of the computer system product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity, and wherein the identifying step comprises identifying from the inventory of the selling entity, as stored in the memory arrangement, one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product.

17. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of storing in a memory arrangement of the computer system configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity, and wherein the defining step comprises defining the configured product which satisfies the customer's needs by constraining the selection of available product options to those stored in the memory arrangement as configuration information.

18. (New) A computer system for facilitating a sale of a product from an inventory of a selling entity, the system comprising:

a memory arrangement having stored therein product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity and configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity;

a user interface configured to receive from a customer needs and desired option selections related to one or more of products of the selling entity; and

a configuration engine, operatively coupled to the memory arrangement and user interface, that (i) receives a value input associated with each desired option selection to rank the importance of each of the desired option selections, (ii) defines configured product which satisfies the customer's needs and the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules to constrain selection of available product options, and (iii) identifies from the stored product inventory information of the selling entity one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections, when an identified available product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not found in the stored product inventory information of the selling entity.

19.   (New) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to one of: (i) a numeric value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection and (ii) a relative value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections.

20.   (New) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the logic rules are selected from a group consisting of: (i) constraint rules which define engineering relationships between product options used to constrain use of combinations of options, (ii) resource rules which define relationships between product options in terms of resources used and resources required, and (iii) cross-reference rules which define relationships between similar product options.

21.   (New) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine presents the customer through the user interface the one or more identified available products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.

22.   (New) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine identifies from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that exactly corresponds to the configured product.

23.   (New) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine defines the configured product which satisfies the customer's needs by constraining the selection of available product options to the stored configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity.